THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI D. PURANDESWARI): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) As a part of the Unviersity Grants Commission (UGC)'s initiatives to bring in academic reforms in higher education, the UGC has written to the Unviersities emphasizing, *inter-alia*, the need for reforming the external written examination and for making a beginning in this regard by introducing semester system. The Universities have been advised that the duration of the semester, number of contact hour per paper, per semester and relative weightage of continuous internal assessment and semester-end examination needs to be prescribed; unambiguously.

(c) to (e) The semester system is in operation in several unviersities. Universities having Engineering/Technology and some other professional courses are mostly running on semester system. The system gives emphasis on continuous internal assessment and reduced the written Examination component to a reasonable level.

Performance of Bihar Madarsa Boards Students

1751. SHRI B.K. HARIPRASAD: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Pratham, an NGO that conducted a survey on the performance of Class X students across the country recently, has listed the students of Bihar Madarsa Board on top of other students under the ICSE and CBSE affiliations;

(b) whether the students of Bihar Madarsa Board have scored a success rate of 91.4 per cent in Class X examinations, with the CBSE students falling behind at 86.4 per cent; and

(c) if so, whether Government would encourage setting up more Madarsa Boards in other States, to improve the performance of minority students?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI MD. ALI. ASHRAF FATMI): (a) Yes sir, News reports on such a study/survey have appeared in a section of media.

(b) and (c) Since Bihar Madarsa Board, the ICSE and the CBSE conduct their respective examinations for Class X or equivalent, any comparison of pass percentages would not be appropriate. Each State is free to establish its own State Madarsa Board.

Universalisation of secondary education

1752. SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA:
SHRI GIREESH KUMAR SANGHI:
SHRI KRISHAN LAL BALMIKI:

Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is formulating a scheme for universalisation of secondary education;

(b) if so, by when the scheme would be finalized;

(c) what would be the funding pattern of the scheme; and

(d) whether Government would share all the costs?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI MD. ALI ASHRAF FATMI): (a) to (d) Central Government has decided to implement a centrally sponsored scheme for unviersalisation of access to and improvement of quality of education at secondary stage during the Eleventh Five Year Plan. Some of the major components of the proposed scheme are, (i) new schools buildings, (ii) additional rooms including classrooms, laboratories, computer room, library room, toilet etc., (iii) teaching-learning aids, (iv) School grant (v) teachers' in service training (vi) additional teachers, (vii) research and innovation, (viii) curricular reforms and (ix) Examinations reforms etc. The proposed scheme envisages sharing of costs between Central Government and State/UT Governments.

Unutilized budget of IGNOU

1753. SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA:
SHRIMATI PREMA CARIAPPA:

Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that IGNOU has not been able to utilize the annual budget allocations;

(b) if so, the details thereof during the last five years and the reasons for under-utilization;

(c) whether it is also a fact that IGNOU has not been able to achieve annual physical targets stating the achievement for current and previous years, as against the annual targets; and

(d) how many Village Knowledge and resource Centres have been opened against annual target during the last three years?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI D. PURANDESWARI): (a) and (b) The Budget allocation for Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU) under Plan Head and the releases made against them for last five years is as under:

(Rs in crore)

	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07
Budget Estimates (Rs)	67.00	67.00	67.00	60.00	100.00
Revised estimates (Rs)	35.30	20.00	67.00	60.00	95.05
Grant released including unspent balance of yester year. (Rs)	35.30	20.00	69.00	56.40	104.00
Expendtiure as reported by IGNOU. (Rs)	11.17	28.75	55.29	65.70	73.53

The figures for the years 2004-05 and 2006-07, in the above table, indicates that grant has been released to IGNOU in said years in accordance with the Budget allocations. However, lesser utilization of allocated budget in the years 2002-03, 2003-04 and 2005-06 was due to late approval of Tenth Plan proposals by Expenditure Finance Committee.